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Spicer gets all spicy over SNL portrayal

And more from the administration that can let literally nothing go

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PALACE ON THE PASTURE

How mega houses are threatening agricultural land in B.C.

metroNEWS

The owners of this 33-acre lot in Pitt Meadows, protected under the Agricultural Land Reserve, have applied to build a 31,000-square-foot mega home on the property, drawing concern from residents and the city. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

Parking costs in the West End could rise 350%

CITY COUNCIL

MLA opposes move, saying it penalizes residents

Jen St. Denis
Metro | Vancouver

City council is set to approve some big changes to street parking in Vancouver's dense West End neighbourhood — including a 350 per cent increase in the residential street parking fee.

It's a move the city's engineering department says is necessary to relieve the West End's "extreme" parking problem, where 99 per cent of parking spots are usually occupied. The hope is to encourage residents to rent underground parking spots in their apartment building by making the street parking just as expensive as underground parking.

Existing permit holders will be grandfathered in at the current rate of about $80 per year, while new permit holders will have to pay $360 a year.

Spencer Chandra Herbert, the MLA for Vancouver-West End, opposes the changes as just one more cost being levied on residents with some of the highest rents in the city. "For somebody who just got a job this year that requires them to have a car, that does no good for them."

Anthony Kupferschmidt, executive director of the West End Seniors Network, said the tight parking situation is causing problems, with home-care providers and visitors to vulnerable seniors unable to find parking.

Part of the city's plan is to separate the West End into three parking zones, meaning a resident permit will no longer cover the entire West End. Seniors, some with mobility challenges, use the entire zone when they go shopping or visit parks and beaches, he said.

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VANCOUVER POP UP STORE

Data renews oil-by-rail fears

ENERGY

Environment advocates call pipeline safety into question

David P. Ball
Metro | Vancouver

A still-slumping global oil market may have dampened prices and slowed the oil flow, but trains loaded with crude continue to roll through British Columbia at nearly double its rate just five years ago.

Nearly three years after a runaway train full of crude oil exploded in downtown Lac-Megantic, Que., killing 47, the amount of such Canadian shipments has climbed by 180 per cent since 2012, according to the latest data from the National Energy Board.

That's even in spite of a 24 per cent drop in the amount of oil shipped by rail last year from 2015.

"Without new pipelines, every new barrel of oil will move by rail," said the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers on its website. "In 2015, about 140,000 barrels per day of crude oil — or about four per cent of Western Canada's production — were moved by rail."

Smoke rises from railway cars from now-defunct Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Railways company that were carrying crude oil after derailing in downtown Lac Megantic, Que., in July 2013. PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

But according to Matt Krogh, with the environmental group STAND (formerly Forest Ethics), the idea that one must accept either oil pipelines or else continue seeing oil-by-rail shipments grow is inappropriate.

"The choice between oil trains and pipelines is a false choice," the Bellingham-based director of STAND's Extreme Oil Campaign told Metro in a phone interview.

"The real choice we're looking at as a society — both Canada and the U.S. — is between a dirty-fuel past and a clean-energy present and future.

"The oil industry wants you to believe that its growth is inevitable. But the reality is quite different when you compare that to the position taken by the world in Paris back in April. We have a world that is on a turning point of going another direction."

STAND is hosting a webinar for those wanting to get involved in the issue on Wednesday at which the question of trains versus pipelines will be discussed by Krogh alongside renowned Indigenous activist and Honor the Earth executive director Winona LaDuke, and Bold Alliance president Jane Kleeb, who helped unite residents along the Keystone XL pipeline route.

"We want to bring forward the lessons that have been learned and the Indigenous fights, with the leaders on Keystone XL in bringing people together," Krogh explained.

But despite federal regulations kicking in last year phasing out the use of the particular thin-shelled train cars that exploded in Lac-Megantic, many continue to refer to oil-by-rail as "bomb trains," despite assurances from CAPP that "rail companies have redoubled their safety efforts and focus on operational safety."

Last year, 4.5 million cubic metres of oil was exported by train from Canada as of Dec. 1, up from 2.7 million in all of 2012. December's data is not yet available.

And with the federal government's rejection of Enbridge's proposed Northern Gateway pipeline last year — and Kinder Morgan's pipeline expansion not complete until 2019 — it seems that the oil trains will keep a-rolling for some time.

BY THE NUMBERS OIL SHIPMENTS

4.9M
Cubic metres of crude oil shipped by rail in Canada throughout 2016.

181%
Approximate percentage by which shipments have increased over five years.

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EDUCATION

Board supports students affected by U.S. travel ban, Quebec tragedy

Wanyee Li
Metro | Vancouver

World leaders and celebrities have publicly condemned the recent American travel ban on people from seven Muslim-majority countries and the mass shooting at a mosque in Quebec, but the head educator at Vancouver School Board still felt compelled to send a clear message to parents, students, and staff — that diversity is welcomed and celebrated in its schools.

Supt. Scott Robinson sent a letter to parents and staff Friday, re-affirming the district's commitment to diversity in response to recent events.

"My belief is that we need to be teaching our kids that we are all human beings and we are all worthy of kindness and compassion," he said.

"When we witness events like these ... they cause us to stop and think about our beliefs. As parents and as educators, it is a really great time to take the time to talk about these issues."

Most importantly, Robinson wanted to send a direct message to families who may be directly impacted by the travel ban.

"I did want students who were directly impacted by this to hear very clearly that we support them and that we stand behind them and their families."

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Queen Elizabeth II makes history with 65 years as British monarch. **World**

HOME loan program to inflate cost of housing

OPINION

Also twice as costly as province has claimed

Tom Davidoff
For Metro

The B.C. government's new Home Owner Mortgage and Equity Partnership (HOME) offers first-time homebuyers subsidized loans that allow down payments as low as 2.5 per cent.

By fuelling demand, this program will likely inflate the cost of entry-level homes in supply-challenged markets like Vancouver. By encouraging people to take on more debt, the program will increase the probability of an ugly housing downturn. The HOME program is also more expensive than the province has claimed.

The Ministry of Finance estimates that for every dollar of loan proceeds under HOME, taxpayers will lose about 19 cents in administrative costs and foregone interest. This estimate ignores the cost of default losses that may arise if borrowers are unable to repay.

The province argues that these default costs are negligible because buyers must qualify for mortgage loan insurance under stringent Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation rules, and because in recent years, default losses on such loans have been negligible. If you have read or seen The Big Short, an account of the U.S. housing crisis of the late 2000s, you've heard that one before. Borrowers default when things go wrong, not when markets are overheated, as CMHC considers Vancouver and Victoria to be at the moment. Overconfidence in the U.S. housing market led to risky loans that fed home price growth and eventually led to losses to lenders and their investors.

A sold sign outside a home in Vancouver. UBC's Tom Davidoff says B.C.'s new homeowner loan program is more expensive than the government claims. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

HOME loans are second liens, which means the province is likely to receive no repayment if the borrower defaults.

An obvious way to estimate the expected cost to taxpayers of default risk is to ask how much it would cost to transfer this risk to a third-party mortgage insurer, like CMHC or Genworth. Not surprisingly, high loan-to-value mortgages and second lien loans are more costly to insure because they are riskier.

Using available prices for mortgage insurance offered by Genworth, I calculated that insurance on a HOME loan would cost 10 to 20 per cent of the loan proceeds. That means the costs of the HOME program are almost double what the province claims. And CMHC has increased the price since I performed that calculation.

A 20 per cent premium does not imply that 20 per cent of borrowers are likely to default. Instead, the market presumably believes there is a real risk that a significant fraction of mortgage loans will default, and that coughing up money just when things have gone so badly that borrowers are defaulting on loans is painful and worth a premium to avoid.

Premier Christy Clark put this well in an interview with Lynda Steele on CKNW, observing that a world in which HOME borrowers default in significant numbers would be so bad that losses in the HOME program would be the least of the province's concerns.

Most people try to hedge risks, and thus put a premium on avoiding losses in bad states of the world. That seems like sensible precaution for a provincial government, too. A home price crash large enough to trigger substantial defaults would be bad for B.C.'s economy and make it difficult for the province to raise funds — just when government assistance would be needed most.

Tom Davidoff is an associate professor at the University of British Columbia's Sauder School of Business. He specializes in real estate markets.

MORTGAGES

Province doles out $1M

David P. Ball
Metro | Vancouver

British Columbia's Home Owner Mortgage and Equity (HOME) Partnership has been panned by economists as financially risky and debt-inducing — and by the Opposition as a vote-buying ploy ahead of May's election.

But that certainly hasn't stopped British Columbians from lining up to claim their up-to $37,500 down payment loan — totalling 17 home owner hopefuls a day in the three weeks after the program opened its doors on Jan. 16.

B.C. doled out at least $1.1 million to 250 home owner hopefuls, BC Housing revealed in a press release Saturday, while another 90 awaited approval.

Those are a fraction of the 42,000 residents B.C. pledged will benefit from its $700-million program, which loans mortgage-qualifying buyers up to five per cent of their purchase price — which they must match — interest-free for 25 years, and with no payments for five.

"The BC HOME Partnership program was created to assist eligible first-time homebuyers who can afford the costs of home ownership enter the market," BC Housing stated.

But the New Democrats accused the province of rolling the dice with families' futures, calling the BC Liberals' pre-election response to skyrocketing housing prices a "plan to sink young people deeper into debt."

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'Jurisdictional no-man's land'

DEVELOPMENT

Proposal for huge real-estate project agitates mayor, residents

Matt Kieltyka
Metro | Vancouver

An "insulting" application for a mega-structure on Agricultural Land Reserve at the far end of a quiet rural road in Pitt Meadows has galvanized the community into action, its mayor says.

Mayor John Becker told Metro he expects his council to follow others, like those in Delta and Richmond, looking at regulating house sizes on protected farmland after residents were shocked to learn of an application for a massive 31,000 square foot estate home on a 33-acre lot on Ford Road.

The property, a former berry farm, was purchased by Sinominco Investment Group in 2011 and has already had two large residential structures built on it recently.

The thought of an even bigger structure built on the same lot has outraged neighbours concerned about valuable ALR land being taken advantage of during the region's housing affordability crisis.

One of those concerned neighbours happens to be Paul Kershaw, a professor at the University of British Columbia's School of Population Health and founder of Generation Squeeze who has become a prominent voice in Metro Vancouver's housing debate.

The owners of this 33-acre lot in Pitt Meadows, protected under the Agricultural Land Reserve, have applied to build a 31,000-square-foot mega home on the property, drawing concern from residents and the city. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

"That's not why we have an agricultural land reserve. Something is going crazy now when we're building almost hotel-sized structures on it," he said of the application four lots down the road from him.

"We already have a problem with expensive home prices and if the land reserve is being created as this space where you can build homes more massive than can be built anywhere else, that's just contributing to the increase in overall prices while compromising the quality of the land."

Kim Grout, the CEO of the Agricultural Land Commission, the independent agency tasked with protecting B.C. farmland and enforcing ALR legislation, said she is concerned about the growing trend of so-called monster homes on protected farmland.

But the size of principle residences on ALR land is regulated by municipalities, not the ALC, she said.

"The principle dwelling is covered by the Local Government Act and so we ourselves aren't able to regulate it," Grout said. "If it's not in our regulation, we can't get involved in establishing criteria for it. But, of course, we encourage municipalities to do so."

Grout said the ALC has worked with the Ministry of Agriculture and municipalities in the past on a bylaw standard to regulate home sizes on ALR land, but uptake has been "all over the map."

Some cities have taken action themselves.

Delta, for example, restricts single-family dwellings on agricultural land to 5,005 square feet.

The City of Richmond last month adopted a report proposing four possible bylaws that will go to public information meetings in March.

"So there will be discussion and public consultation and great debate in Richmond for two months, and then we'll make a decision," said Richmond Coun. Harold Steves, a farmer himself.

Kershaw questioned why his municipality hasn't taken the same kind of action as Delta and Richmond.

> **As a community, we're going to have to deal with this.**
> Mayor John Becker

"What's frustrating about the Pitt Meadows example is that we're sort of caught in this jurisdictional no-man's land," he said.

"The ALC says, 'We don't have any jurisdiction over the size of a home' and then the municipality says, 'Well, we don't really have any bylaws that speak to the size of homes on acreage.'"

While Becker said he'd prefer the province to "step up to the plate with some kind of uniform approach" instead of having municipalities individually tackle it "in some piecemeal fashion", he said it's time for Pitt Meadows council to revisit the issue.

Becker said the city tried to tackle house sizes on ALR land (which makes up 85 per cent of Pitt Meadows) several years ago, but council's efforts "went down in flames" due to the lack of public consultation.

This latest application has been the subject of discussion at in-camera council meetings and Becker believes there's now a groundswell of support from residents.

"With respect to the specifics of this monster structure, it really has galvanized people's attention that this is an issue," the mayor told Metro. "Clearly — 31,000 square feet — I don't call this a home. I call it a structure. To suggest that it (is a residence) is, frankly, an insult to my intelligence. You can call a horse a cow, but it's not going to give milk."

This time around, he's determined to do a better job engaging landowners, the Indo-Canadian community (which he said has a tradition of housing multiple generations on one property), investors and other stakeholders.

"It is certainly my sense that there are sweet spots to be found on this where there is a reasonable restriction on the structure footprints of residences," he said. "As a community, we're going to have to deal with this."

The application for the estate home has not yet gone to council or been approved.

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Trudeau's youth role being overshadowed

POLITICS

Critics say he has mixed record on portfolio

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Liberal President Anna Gainey, left, and Liberal Youth President Mira Ahmad at the 2016 Liberal Biennial Convention in Winnipeg. THE CANADIAN PRESS

After winning the last federal election, the fresh-faced new prime minister, the second youngest ever to assume the office, bestowed upon himself a fitting extra portfolio: Minister of Youth.

One of his first acts was to publish mandate letters for each of his cabinet ministers. They outline for all to see what important work Trudeau expected from his ministers in the coming months and years.

But there was — and still is — a striking omission. While some relevant platform points were included in his missives to ministers in finance and labour, Trudeau published no mandate letter for his self-imposed gig. And none appeared when the letters were refreshed after his January cabinet shuffle.

More than a year into the Liberals' majority mandate, a sense has emerged that rather than bringing welcome gravitas and attention to the issues facing young people today, Trudeau the Prime Minister is overshadowing Trudeau the Youth Minister.

He has a mixed-record on fulfilling the youth-oriented promises of his party's 2015 platform. In October, the sociable and still-high-polling PM was heckled during an on-stage interview with young members of the Canadian Labour Congress, after outrage was spewed over the finance minister's comment that "job churn"— having to move from job to job over the course of your career — is an intractable part of the 21st century economy.

At the same time, student activists are decrying his performance on accessibility-to-education, as tuition and student debt spike to record heights and youth unemployment stubbornly remains almost double the rate of the total population.

"This government pays a lot of lip service to youth," said Bilan Arte, president of the Canadian Federation of Students, which advocates for free post-secondary education. "We're not just a voting block that can be accessed every other election."

Whether such criticism is fair is up for debate. Vasiliki Bednar, head of the government's Expert Panel on Youth Employment that was created last fall, said Trudeau's decision to appoint himself youth minister showed issues such as tuition, student debt and youth unemployment are a priority for the government

She added that the "job churn" comment was an honest portrayal of the reality facing young workers.

"A government that pretends that's not a reality, and designs programs for quote-unquote 'standard work,' which is full-time forever jobs, is not a government that I want, because that's an unrealistic, fantasy government," Bednar said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

EQUALITY

Six-year-old child is leading the way in gender education

Haley Ryan
Metro | Halifax

Elliott Sweeny loves dogs, banana bread, Beyoncé, sometimes wearing skirts, and pink rainboots. In the Halifax six-year-old's words, Elliott also says they have a "boy body and a girl brain."

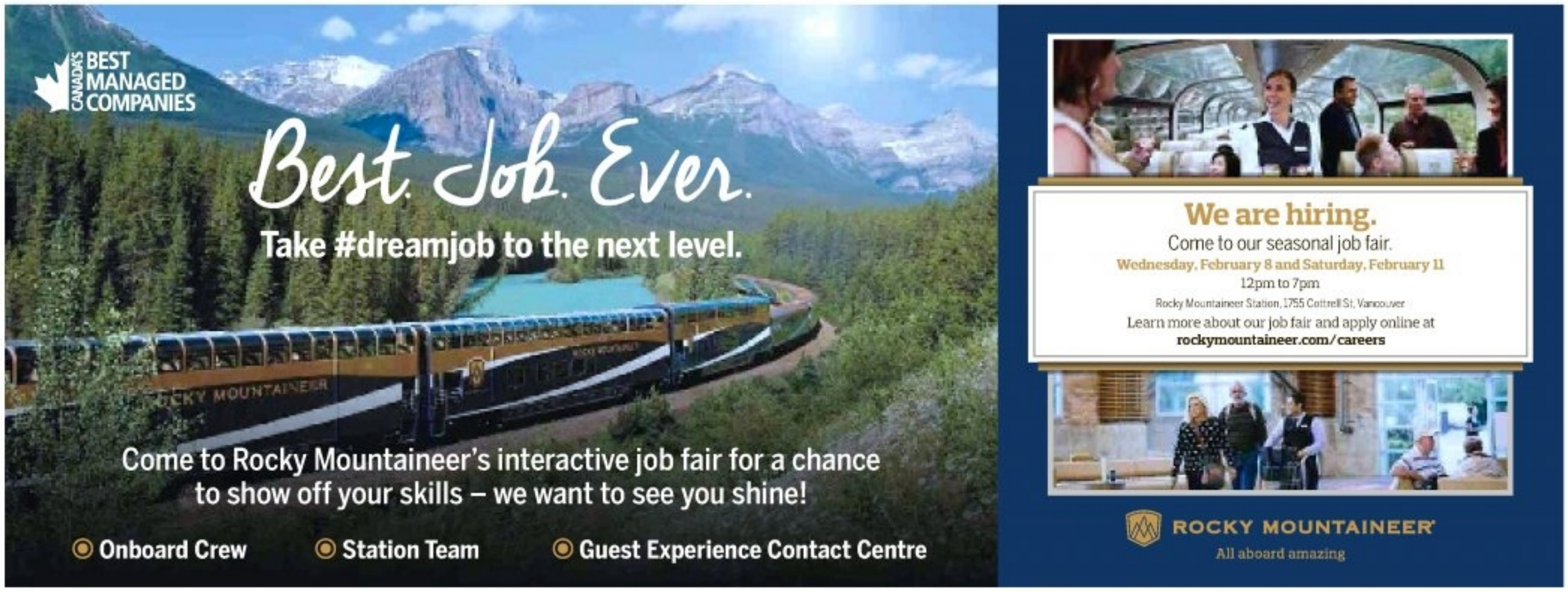
Curled up on a couch with their mom Kym Sweeny at the South House Sexual and Gender Resource Centre, Elliott said they usually don't mind explaining how they identify as gender fluid and gender-nonconforming, or use "they/them" pronouns — but kids can say mean things.

"You can't just be bullies just because you don't know what things are, and just because you don't think it's right — because it actually is right," Elliott said.

Kym said some people on the radio were talking about women's periods in a joking way. When Elliott asked if people made fun of menstruation because they didn't understand it, Kym said "sometimes."

The next day Elliott asked for magazines to make a collage about things people should know more about, adding glitter and photos of Beyoncé and trans actress Laverne Cox next to words like consent, racism, and gender — which they asked for help writing.

They plan a series of popup schools. All will have a kid or young adult paired with a "grownup" to talk about topics they're experts in, Kym said, while caregivers can talk about their experiences raising gender-nonconforming or LGBTQ kids.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SENATE

Democrats hold floor in protest

Democrats announced plans Monday to hold the Senate floor around the clock to protest Republicans' push to confirm President Donald Trump's cabinet picks.

Democrats' effort got under way as the Senate headed toward a showdown vote Tuesday on Education Secretary nominee Betsy DeVos, a wealthy GOP donor who has advocated for alternatives to public education. DeVos' nomination has drawn particularly fierce opposition from teachers' unions and others.

Two GOP senators have announced plans to oppose her, which could result in a 50-50 Senate vote Tuesday.

That would leave Vice-President Mike Pence in the role of tie-breaker, something that has never happened with a cabinet nominee in the Senate's history, according to the Senate historian.

"Democrats will hold the floor for the next 24 hours until the final vote to do everything we can to persuade just one more Republican to join us," Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., said on the floor around mid-day Monday.

"And I strongly encourage people across the country to join us — to double down on your advocacy — and to keep making your voices heard for these last 24 hours."

Republicans accused Democrats of slow-walking qualified nominees to placate liberal base voters who still haven't come to terms with Trump's election.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nazanin Zinouri, 29, is greeted at the Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport in Greer, S.C., on Monday. Zinouri, an Iranian engineer and Clemson University graduate, had been unable to return to the U.S. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. Justice Department pushes to reinstate ban

POLITICS

States argue Muslim ban would 'unleash chaos again'

The fierce battle over President Donald Trump's travel and refugee ban edged up the judicial escalator Monday, headed for a possible final faceoff at the Supreme Court. Travellers, temporarily unbound, tearfully reunited with loved ones at U.S. airports.

The Justice Department prepared to ask a San Francisco-based federal appeals court to restore Trump's ban on travellers from seven predominantly Muslim nations. The lawyers were expected to argue in a brief that the president, not the courts, has the authority to set national security policy and that an executive order to control access at the country's borders is lawful.

The filing with the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals was to be the latest salvo in a high-stakes legal fight surrounding Trump's order, which was halted Friday by a federal judge in Washington state.

The appeals court refused to immediately reinstate the ban, and lawyers for Washington and Minnesota argued anew on Monday that any resumption would "unleash chaos again," separating families and stranding university students. Telephone oral arguments have been scheduled for Tuesday afternoon. The San Francisco-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals will hear from lawyers from the federal government and states suing Trump.

The president's executive order has faced legal uncertainty ever since Friday's ruling by U.S. District Judge James Robart, which challenged both Trump's authority and his ability to fulfil a campaign promise. The State Department quickly said people from the seven countries — Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen — could travel to the U.S. if they had valid visas.

The legal fight involves two divergent views of the role of the executive branch and the court system. The government has asserted that the president alone has the power to decide who can enter or stay in the United States, while Robart has said a judge's job is to ensure that an action taken by the government "comports with our country's laws."

States challenging the ban have been joined by technology companies, who have said it makes it more difficult to recruit employees, and by attorneys general from more than a dozen states. A declaration filed by John Kerry and Madeleine Albright, former secretaries of state, said the ban would disrupt lives and cripple U.S. counterterrorism partnerships around the world.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GLOBAL DIGEST

AFGHANISTAN

Ransom could have freed family of hostages: Report

A new report claims that Canadian Joshua Boyle, his American wife, Caitlan Coleman, and their two young sons could have been freed for a $150,000 ransom, but that the FBI did not pursue the deal with their kidnappers.

According to two unnamed American "officials directly involved in the case," VOX reported Monday that a Taliban representative had told U.S. military negotiators of the proposed deal, but that when news was relayed to the FBI, "the agency never followed up." The FBI did not comment on the report. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

UNITED KINGDOM

Elizabeth II marks 65 years as queen

Queen Elizabeth II has become the first British monarch to reach the milestone of 65 years on the throne.

Monday's Sapphire Jubilee is being marked with cannon salutes in London's Green Park and at the Tower of London.

Buckingham Palace also released a photo of the queen by David Bailey to mark the occasion. In the picture, taken in 2014, the monarch wears a suite of sapphire jewelry given to her by her father as a wedding gift in 1947.

Elizabeth surpassed Queen Victoria as Britain's longest-serving monarch in 2015. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Your essential daily news
Tuesday, February 7, 2017

MICHAEL COREN ON MILO'S MISSION TO DIVIDE

At Berkeley, most of those protesting were peaceful and responsible but, as is so common, the extremes were triumphant. Two sets of fanatics had their way: those who disrupted the speech and those who planned it.

This year marks the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, sparked in part by the Roman Catholic Church's sale of indulgences. The more you paid, the less time you and your loved ones spent in purgatory. As the rhyme of the time had it, "As soon as a coin in the coffer rings/the soul from purgatory springs."

I couldn't help thinking of all this when reading of the sordid events at The University of California, Berkeley last week when a planned speech by the ultra right-wing narcissist and professional provocateur Milo Yiannopoulos was cancelled after around 150 masked thugs used fireworks, baseball bats and various forms of violence to attack those attending the event.

Milo — he and his acolytes rather ludicrously use the single name — is senior editor for the far right website Breitbart News. He is a bit of a legend in his own lunchtime, and most people have never heard of him, but for the hard right and the hard left he is an icon of either truth or lies. Actually he is neither. A fringe journalist with a troubled past, he reinvented himself as a self-defining fierce, fearless spokesman for those waging war against the chimera of political correctness.

His means of fighting this war against an imaginary foe is to insult and mock anybody who annoys him. Liberals, feminists, the overweight, trans people, Muslims, gays — even though he is himself gay and insists on using the term "f—t." It all becomes somewhat tedious but it arouses those who obviously would like to do the same but lack the ability or the platform. He is a conduit for those who confuse freedom of speech with the licence to abuse. The sewers breathe once again.

SEWER SPOKESMAN Far-right icon Milo Yiannopoulos is fighting a fake crusade against made-up enemies: feminists, trans people, Muslims and anyone else he doesn't like, Michael Coren writes.
JEREMY PAPASSO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

At Berkeley, most of those protesting were peaceful and responsible but, as is so common, the extremes were triumphant. I use the plural because two sets of fanatics had their way: those who disrupted the speech and those who planned it. You see, this is a dark symbiosis, a grotesque theatre of the absurd where the polarized of right and left destroy the vast middle of ground of sensible disagreement and debate.

And nothing, of course, makes the "coin in the coffer ring" as much as playing the victim and crying that free speech and liberty are under threat. There is money to be made in becoming a champion of white, straight, conservative people who have convinced themselves that they are being persecuted.

The violence at Berkeley, and at other such events, is unacceptable. But there is violence in language as well as action. If one degrades a race, marginalizes a sexuality, condemns a people, there tend to be consequences. Surely the recent obscene events in Quebec City taught us that. One fist can do damage; one broadcast, article or Internet rant can lead to a lot more.

Idiots provoke and idiots are provoked. Milo, and for that matter his banal imitators in Canada, have to establish a false problem if they are to set themselves up as the solution. Build it and they will come.

So if you claim that Islamic extremists are everywhere, that we can no longer speak our minds, that media conspiracies are preventing us from knowing the truth, and that being a white man is considered a crime, enough credulous and insecure people will accept it and act accordingly. Witness the election of Donald Trump.

In actual fact there are genuine dilemmas about speech, tolerance, the meeting place of secular pluralism and religion ideas, and the way we deal with justice and equality issues, and these are intensely sensitive and delicate.

It's because of that sensitivity and delicacy that we have to respond with empathy, compassion, intelligence and responsibility. Screaming is easy, listening far more difficult; outrage satisfies hysteria and anger, consideration fulfils the intellect and the soul.

The hoodlums in California will be punished and Milo will fade away before most of us even knew he was there. The same, God willing, will happen to those Canadian rightists who assume they're being rebellious when they're just childish conformists. But some of the divisions caused will take longer to heal and that's difficult to forgive.

Personally, I'd just ignore these clownish performers. As for the coins in the coffers, integrity is far more valuable than money.

Screaming is easy, listening far more difficult.

Michael Coren is the author of Epiphany: A Christian's Change of Heart and Mind Over Same-Sex Marriage.

Should community centres be able to share resources communally?

CITY HOLLER
Trish Kelly

Tomorrow night, the Vancouver Park Board will hold a special meeting to discuss how our 23 community centres are run. The event is anticipated to be so contentious the Park Board has rented the Wosk Centre downtown to accommodate all of the upset people, and they've even got a hold on Thursday for additional speakers.

While you might assume community centres are run like other public assets, for example like your neighbourhood library branch, it's much more complicated than that. The Park Board has contractual agreements with neighbourhood-based associations that actually make many of the programming and financial decisions at each centre. For example, that community centre with the awesome pool you like so much you're willing to travel across town to use it, is actually run by a group of volunteers who decide what to do with all those pool fees. They even decide which low-income neighbours can have a subsidized rate.

While the original intention of this agreement was to ensure programming reflects the unique needs of the neighbourhood, there are negative consequences to running a public asset this way.

It's true, every community centre is unique. For example, some have pools, others have ice rinks, kitchens and steam rooms. The nicer ones also bring in the most revenue.

Community centres don't share revenues, so if you live near a community centre without a sexy amenity that brings in revenue, there probably isn't money for upgrades of the rundown gym equipment or to create programs that reflect the neighbourhood needs, like a breakfast program for low-income kids.

While a community centre with great amenities might actually make more than it needs and sit on a surplus, the other community centre scrambles for grants to cover the costs of its breakfast program. Isn't that bizarre?

Think back to the last time you wanted a library book that was not available at your branch. Since you could see the book was available at the main library, you just requested a transfer and a few days later, the book arrived. It's one system, and the entire collection belongs to us all, regardless of what neighbourhood we live in. If we ran our libraries the way we run our community centres, your local branch would have to say "I'm sorry we don't have it", or set up a fundraiser to get the money together to buy a copy.

In the current arrangement, community centres with sexy amenities haven't volunteered their surpluses to feed the kids at poorer community centres. If you think they should have to, then you've got a date with the Park Board on Wednesday night to tell them so.

Trish Kelly lives and writes in East Vancouver. Follow her on Twitter @trishkellyc.

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metro LIFE

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Fresh from her Super Bowl cameo, Lady Gaga announces a world tour starting in Canada in August

Behind the swinging curtains

SEXUALITY

Polyamorous advocates love openness...just follow the rules

Fatima Mechtab, marketing and events coordinator at Oasis Aqualounge, the Toronto adult playground. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Toronto's Oasis Aqualounge is a pretty open environment. The clothing-optional sex club hosts events each week for people to explore their sexual fantasies. But for such a liberal venue, there are certainly a lot of rules.

No photos. Certain areas are off limits to men unless accompanied by a woman. No touching of any kind unless given permission. No means no, of course, but the club takes it a step further: only yes means yes. That means there are no sexy times until consent is verbalized, says Fatima Mechtab, the marketing and events co-ordinator at Oasis, which had approximately 16,000 members last year.

The clothing-optional space, where sex is allowed, is by its nature vulnerable, she says. The rules are to make sure everyone feels safe, comfortable and encourage people to talk. "A big problem with consent is people assume it's something you don't have to verbalize," she says.

In fact, when it comes to sex, there's lots that people don't talk about — but should.

Mechtab, a queer woman who has explored swinging and polyamorous relationships in the past, says these types of strict rules are common in "the lifestyle," a term for consensually non-monogamous couples. And, she says, rules make relationships better.

Couples and the locations they go to play have to create an environment in which all parties feel not only safe, but also heard. These boundaries take away the grey areas, forcing couples to say what they do or don't want and what they need from sexual encounters. And there's a lot non-swingers can learn from them about building a healthy (and satisfied) relationship.

A successful swinging relationship is based on constant communication, says Carol Hunt, founder of VenusCouples, a Montreal-based online forum for "sex-positive" exploration of the lifestyle. She and her husband have been swinging for a decade. Before any party or outing, they agree upon a set of boundaries (such as they'll always be in the same room during sex) and expectations for the evening (be it sex with another person or a night observing others).

Afterwards, they always break their experience down: what they liked, what they didn't like, and what would they like to try in the future?

While it might seem exhausting to always talk about sex, Hunt says it means both parties feel their needs are being heard. If her husband wants to try something new, but she's not interested, the decision isn't shut down entirely. Instead, they discuss both points of view and try and find a happy middle ground in which they can explore. No always means no — but that's only the start of the conversation.

That consensus-building tricks out of the bedroom, says Edward Fernandes, a professor of sexuality specializing in swingers, at Barton University in North Carolina. "I've had people say, 'We used to have trouble with our finances — we couldn't talk about this — and once we went into swinging, that went away,'" says the Toronto expat. "People will often avoid talking about things, because they don't know how (their partner) is going to respond," says Fernandes. "So we hide. Swinging tends to pull that curtain." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

SPICING IT UP

Carol Hunt suggests couples looking to spice up their bedroom can start small:

- Make it a point to go to a sex shop, for example, to discuss what both parties might enjoy or not. To avoid embarrassment, make it a rule that neither party can wander off on their own: you're in it together and that can decrease the awkwardness.
- Watching porn can be a great way to get both parties in the mood. But before hitting play, Hunt suggests setting expectations: you'll only watch for an hour, and pick one act to try and re-create.
- If you're trying something new and don't enjoy it the first time, Hunt say don't shut it down right away. Commit to revisiting the act at least once at a later date, and if you still don't enjoy it, then it's OK to take it off the table for the future.
- Great relationships need work, she says. Set aside a couple hours each week just to be with each other. No television, no distractions (and if you want, no clothes).

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

TV BRIEFS

Hal and Jo's messy Diet

Suppose you're a massive streaming service that wants to encourage Canadians to watch your gory new black comedy with a health-conscious name. What do you do?

Well, if you're Netflix and your new show is the bizarre zombie comedy Santa Clarita Diet, the easy answer is you recruit Hal Johnson and Joanna McLeod, a pair imprinted on the brains of us all as the country's gently encouraging faces of health and fitness. Then you hand them a chainsaw.

So, without telling us anything at all about Santa Clarita Diet, the tidy two-minute promo of darkly funny training and terror should be enough to tell you whether you want to give the Diet a go.

Santa Clarita Diet's ten-episode first season, starring Drew Barrymore, premiered Feb. 3 on Netflix.

ANDREW FIFIELD/METRO

COMEDY

Spicer asks SNL to 'dial back' portrayal

Andrew Fifield
Metro | Toronto

Despite the surfacing of Steve Bannon, White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer is arguably the most recognizable face of the Trump Administration.

This makes Spicer and his caustic, prop-peppered press conferences perfect fodder for Melissa McCarthy and the writers at Saturday Night Live.

McCarthy's briefing bullying received rave reviews after it aired over the weekend, but the actress shouldn't count Spicer himself among her fans.

Instead, the fiery face of the Trump White House suggested McCarthy "could dial back" when Extra caught up with him on Super Bowl Sunday.

The press secretary appeared piqued by his doppelganger's mouthful of gum, a nod to Spicer's well-known penchant for cinnamon gum. He suggested the actress "needs to slow down on the gum chewing, way too many pieces in there."

But like a good soldier, Spicer rolled out a stronger defence when it came to his boss and Alec Baldwin's portrayal of him.

"Alec has gone from funny to mean, and that's unfortunate," Spicer lamented. "SNL used to be really funny. There's a streak of meanness now that they've crossed over to mean."

Melissa McCarthy (left) as Sean Spicer. CONTRIBUTED/FILE

JOHANNA SCHNELLER **WHAT I'M WATCHING**

Statements arrive in the commercial break

THE SHOW: Superbowl LI (Fox/CTV)
THE MOMENT: The censored ad

84 Lumber's commercial was partially banned. CONTRIBUTED

A struggling mother and daughter make their way north through the Mexican desert. The daughter collects scraps of cloth and plastic along the way. There the ad, for Pennsylvania-based company 84 Lumber, stops, and directs viewers to Journey84.com.

In the online half of the ad, American workmen on the Mexican border saw lumber. The mother and daughter arrive at a huge, uncrossable wall. The mother cries. The daughter shows her what she's been making with the scraps: an American flag. Suddenly a truck drives by. The mother's face lights up. The workmen weren't building the wall. They were building a gate. Mother and daughter walk through to this line: "The will to succeed will always be welcome here."

I thought Lady Gaga's halftime extravaganza would make a statement against Trump's refugee/immigrant ban. But she went for understatement, letting her lyrics and her dancers, a rainbow of race and gender, make a subtle point.

Instead, the statements came in the commercial breaks. Budweiser depicted the prejudice its German-immigrant founder faced. Coke revived a 2014 ad featuring a multilingual America the Beautiful. Audi advocated for equal pay and Airbnb announced, "The world is more beautiful the more you accept."

84 Lumber was gutsiest: Fox rejected their full commercial as "too controversial." The piece that aired sent so many viewers to the website that it crashed. Meanwhile, Donald Trump left his Mar-a-Lago viewing party after halftime. Because his team, the Patriots, was losing? Or because of the ads?

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

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Do you want to live a long life? What if you can fill that life with rich, high-quality years of activity and personal engagement?

The good news is that we can live longer, healthier lives by making good choices now.

Only 100 years ago, the average lifespan was 58 to 60 years. Now we're living into our eighties.

Some of the increase in our longevity, about 10-15 per cent, can be attributed to our genes. The rest depends on where we live, our access to healthcare, and especially our personal lifestyle habits.

Yes, you knew this was coming. The better we eat and the more we move will make a big difference in how long and well we live.

Taking care of our health doesn't begin at 50. It's never too soon to start. Prevention is more important than a cure.

For example, every decade of high cholesterol levels after age thirty can double to quadruple your risk for cardiovascular disease in your sixties. Other research suggests that making healthful lifestyle choices can help prevent up to two thirds of cancer. Also, "sitting is the new smoking" when it comes to negatively impacting your health.

The point is not to limp along toward our last decade, but to be vigorous until the end of our lives.

A recent study published by the American Geriatrics Society reported that people are living longer, better quality years, and the illnesses that eventually take us away happen over a more compressed period — the last few weeks or months of life.

To help make this happen to us, we can take lessons from the Blue Zones. These are unique regions around the world that researchers have identified where people live significantly longer than elsewhere.

These diverse communities have strikingly similar themes for longevity. Their members are physically active, but not necessarily with formal exercise; they walk everywhere, and spend much of their time enjoying physical pursuits such as gardening. They eat a plant-based diet with lots of fruits, vegetables and whole grains. And they are not overweight.

They also have a positive and hopeful outlook on life. Even more importantly, they have purpose and are connected to their family and community members.

Our frame of mind is also very important in keeping us healthy. Stress makes us more vulnerable to illness. When looking at ways to improve your health, don't underestimate the power of your mind-body connection.

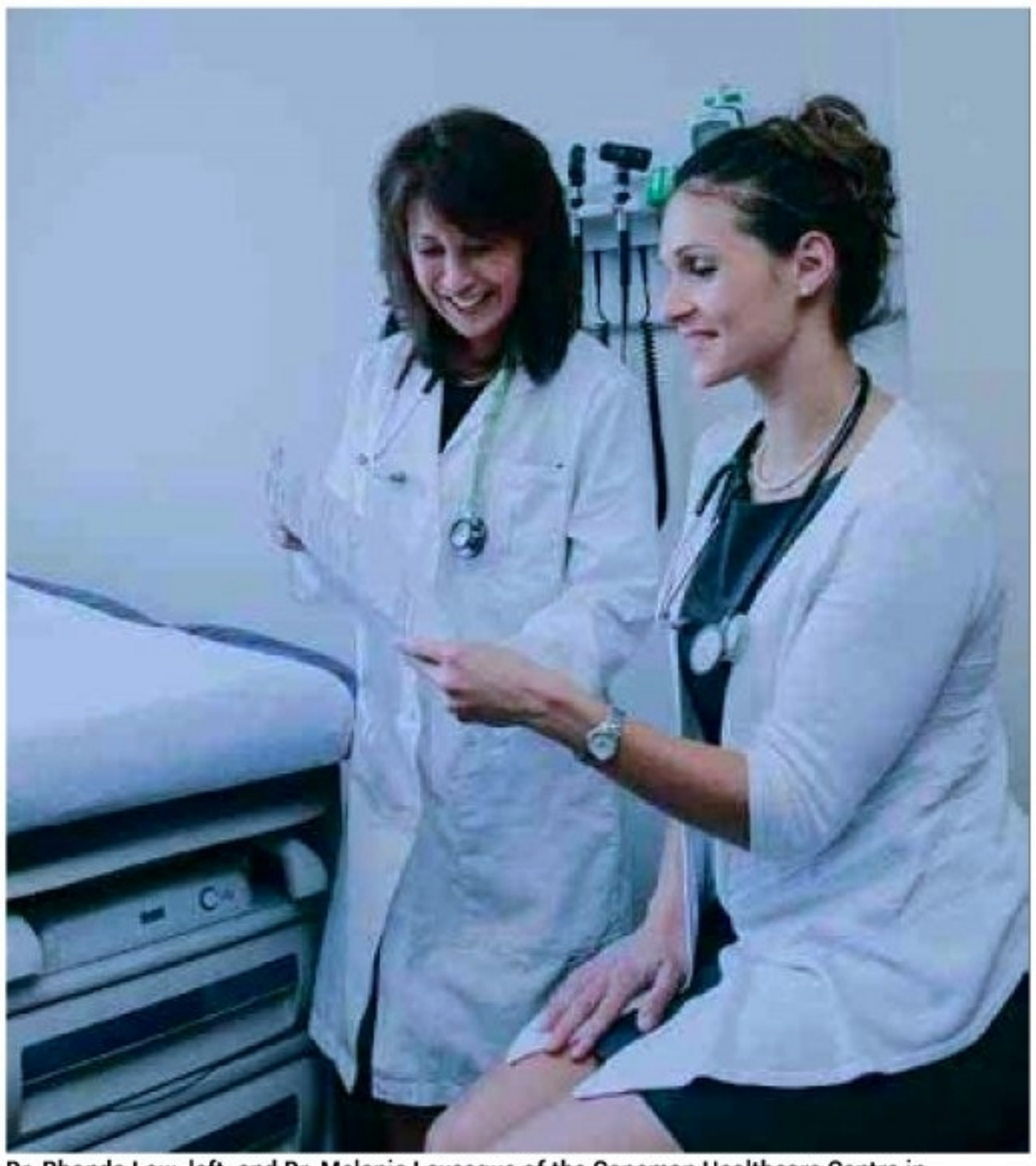
If you're not sure where to start making improvements or which preventative health measures to take now, visit your doctor for guidance. An open relationship with your doctor is key. But it doesn't stop there. Having access to a team of health care providers goes a long way in addressing your individual health risks.

For example, if you suffer from hypertension, you may benefit from visiting a dietitian to review your diet. And if you're unsure about how to fit exercise into your schedule, a kinesiologist will be able to tailor a program for your specific lifestyle.

It may feel challenging to make decisions about our health now that will affect our later years; a time that may seem so far away. But think of it this way, taking a comprehensive approach will not only give you better long-term health outcomes, it will also give you the added benefit of a healthier life now. You don't need to wait a long time for results.

By visiting your doctor, or better yet, an entire team of integrated caregivers such as Copeman Healthcare, you can begin the process of actively managing or improving your current vitality for a lifetime of vibrant health.

— DR. RHONDA LOW, FAMILY PHYSICIAN AT COPEMAN HEALTHCARE



Dr. Rhonda Low, left, and Dr. Melanie Levesque of the Copeman Healthcare Centre in downtown Vancouver. CONTRIBUTED

COPEMAN HEALTHCARE CENTRE

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Did this Vancouver company unlock the formula for better health outcomes?

BY NICOLE AUBERTIN

Imagine your very own dedicated healthcare team working with you to find ways to optimize your health. Now imagine that same team taking it one step further and collaborating together, looking for ways to maximize disease prevention, facilitate early detection and execute timely interventions. It is exactly this type of collaboration that has become the hallmark of Copeman Healthcare.

Collaborative and unhurried care

"There is nothing quite like the peace of mind that comes from having several different care professionals working together on your chart," says Chris Nedelmann, CEO of Copeman Healthcare, "In addition to collaboration, our model also strongly emphasizes unhurried, on-time visits and outstanding customer service."

In the Copeman model, the care of a physician is integrated with teams of registered dietitians, kinesiologists, family health nurses, diagnostic staff and other professionals as required.

"It is this combination of providing adequate time, delivering care through a multi-professional team and looking at physical, psychological and cognitive indicators that produces the best health outcomes," says Nedelmann.

Early disease detection

Regular baseline assessments track subtle changes in health and assist with early detection. By catching things early teams can respond immediately when treatment is most effective. Services are tailored to the unique needs of clients allowing for a truly integrated approach to health management and disease prevention.

Personalized programs

Clients typically choose between the ongoing care program called LifePlus or an annual Comprehensive Health Assessment (CHA). In either case, clients receive an annual head-to-toe assessment that examines a multitude of health risk factors. A personalized prevention plan is then developed for the client with suggestions for mitigating their own specific risks.

Families are invited to enrol their children in Copeman Kids, a unique program that offers same-day visits, age-appropriate health screening and developmental assessments to evaluate speech and language development.

Corporate health services

Copeman Healthcare also provides services for organizations and corporations. Health plans are designed to drive optimum workplace wellness and ensure executives and highly valued employees are operating at peak performance. As part of its corporate services, Copeman Healthcare can perform health audits and provide aggregate, anonymous data on the state of the organization's health.

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Central to all services is the concept of wellness coaching – providing ongoing support and guidance for optimizing nutrition, exercise, sleep and mental health. Whatever your needs, let Copeman Healthcare design a program that is right for you.

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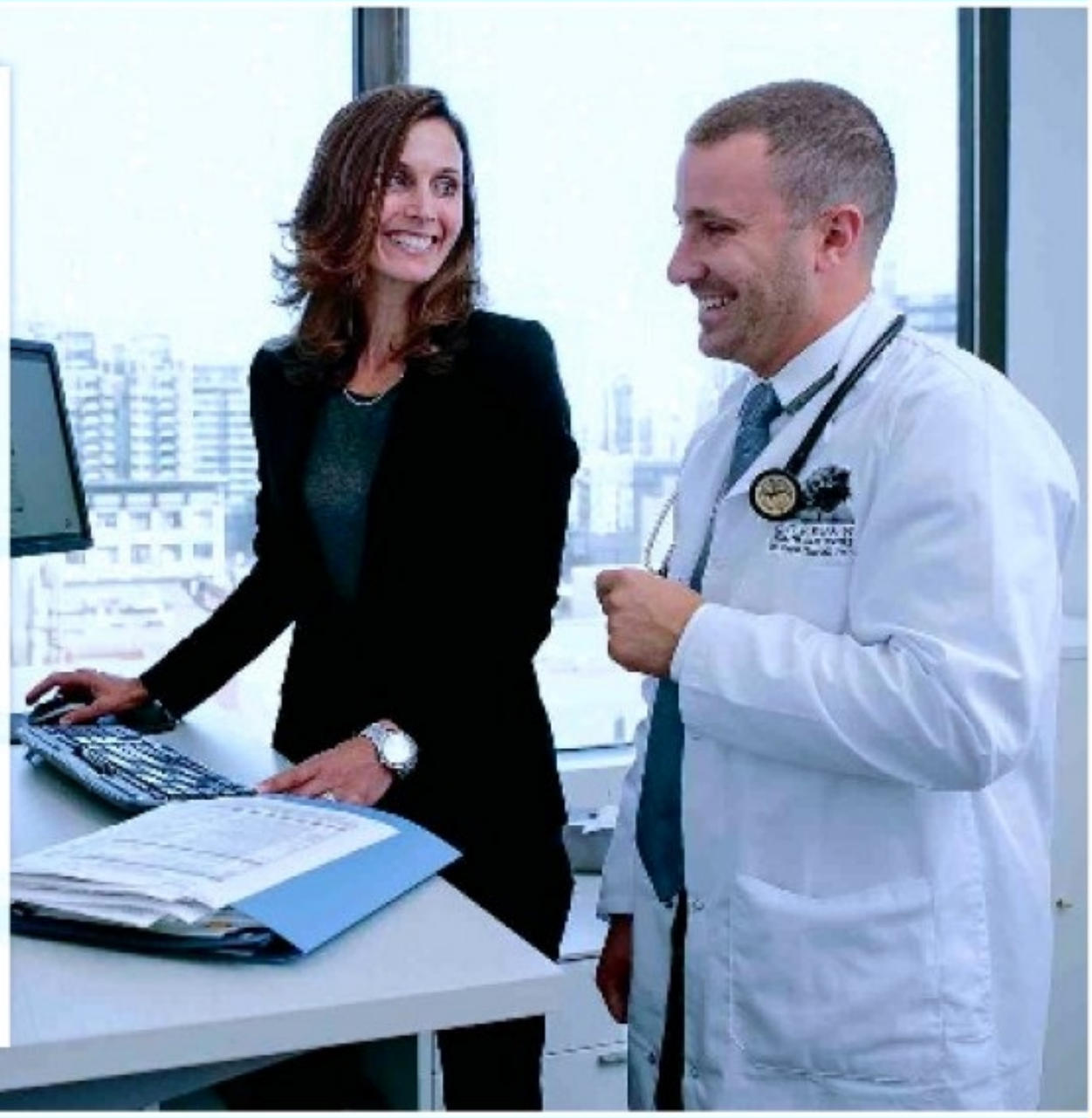

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Sure Cupid might reign supreme for one special day in February, but campus-dwellers can keep the swoon-factor going all semester with courses that prioritize passion on the lesson plan.

Philosophy of Love and Desire: Trent University

Been daydreaming about your on-campus crush all day long? Delve a little deeper into the depths of human desire with this comprehensive course on human nature, happiness and everything 'l-o-v-e'. Topics such as the nature of love, the relationship between what we value and what we desire, and the ethics of relationships will be considered.

Chocolate Confections: George Brown College

There's nothing quite like delivering a box of sweets to ramp up the romance in your relationship. And if those candies were hand-crafted in your own kitchen? Well you've just about won the dating game. George Brown's confection course teaches students how to produce advanced chocolate treats in both traditional and contemporary styles. Truffles, moulded bonbons, pralines, jellies, peppermint patties and marrons glacés are on the menu.

The Mating Game: Fanshawe College

A primer on love, sex and marriage from a psychological standpoint, this course seeks to emphasize that without some hint of romance, humankind would inevitably perish. Topics include mate preferences, attraction and courtship, sex appeal, online relationship development and cyber-flirting. Marriage in its many forms (love-based, arranged, same-sex, monogamous, and polyamorous) will also be mulled over.

Floral Design: Langara College

If blossoms are the way to your boo-thing's heart, then figure out the best way to blend a bouquet into birthdays, anniversaries, and any other occasion you can along your road to romance. Langara's floral design students learn how to determine what types of arrangements pair best with certain occasions what combos of content create the most alluring look and scent.

Queer theories: University of Ottawa

Step outside of the same old he-met-she storyline with this course that examines the history of gay and lesbian studies and the emergence of queer theory and cultures in modern society. Students enrolled in this course examine a range of culture expressions of sex and love, and seek to gain a greater understanding of the eclectic nature of intimacy.

Studies in Renaissance Love Poetry: Saint Mary's University

Take a page from some of the old greats and compare your partner to a summer's day, with help from this course that focuses on Renaissance love poetry in its cultural, social and philosophical contexts. With a unit specifically on the sonnet and its relationship to the courtly love tradition, students of the course will be sure to emerge armed with content worthy of a kiss or two.

—*LIZ BEDDALL*

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Electricity is needed for so many different uses in so many different industries. As a result, there are many career opportunities in the field. As a construction electrician, you can specialize in installing and maintaining electrical power, lighting, heating, control, alarms, or data and communication.

The profession is well-paid too. The median wage for an electrician in B.C. is $27 per hour, according to jobbank.gc.ca.

If you're interested in starting on this rewarding career path, the Construction Electrician Foundation (CEF) program at Vancouver Career College is the place to start.

ISTOCK

And now is a great time, because Vancouver Career College's Burnaby campus is offering a special, limited-time scholarship for all students in the CEF program. Those who enroll in the afternoon class before March 30 will get $1,500 toward their tuition.

Graduates of the program who want to continue their education can take the Construction Electrician Level 2 program at Vancouver Career College. It's a chance to broaden the career opportunities available to you down the road.

Find out more about the program at Vancouver Career College online at studycef.vccollege.ca, or by phone at 1-800-993-4086.

Study and Go Abroad Fair opens up a world of possibilities for students

CONTRIBUTED

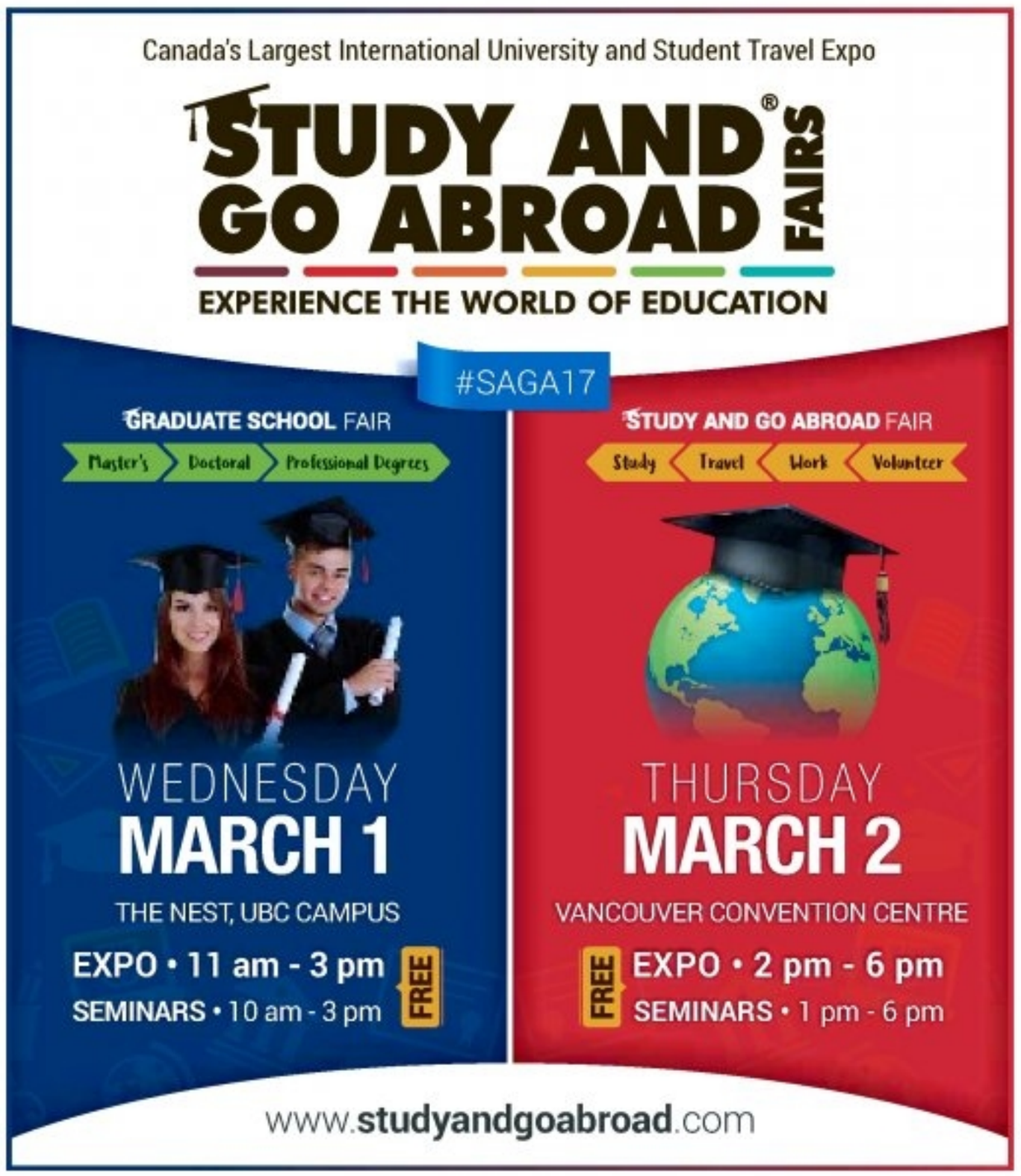
Universities and graduate schools from around the world, many of them ranked in the world's Top 100, will participate in the Graduate School Fair on March 1 at The Nest (on campus at UBC) and the Study and Go Abroad Fair on March 2 at the Vancouver Convention Centre to meet with students who are looking to take an undergraduate or postgraduate degree or certificate program abroad.

"The Graduate School Fair and the Study and Go Abroad Fair are exciting events as they showcase a whole range of short-term and long-term study opportunities in many different fields and countries; Australia, UK, U.S.A., Caribbean, Switzerland, Italy, to name a few," says Katie Idle, organizer of the event. "At the expos, we welcome students looking for post-secondary options, and their parents, educators and young professionals looking to retrain."

Idle mentions that the Study and Go Abroad expo on March 2 also features a Travel Zone, with gap year and other student travel options; work abroad, internships, language travel, as well as free seminars during the day.

"Studying abroad is an investment in the future, looks great on a resumé and is a differentiator in an increasingly competitive labour market. As well, universities abroad sometimes offer shorter programs — three-year undergraduate degrees and one-year Master's — greater program choice and more availability in fields such as Medicine, Law and Pharmacy", Idle adds.

"The best thing about the expos is that they are totally free of charge. Information on exhibitors, scholarships and seminars can be found on the website studyandgoabroad.com."



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Women's Memorial March relevant to justice students

On Feb. 14, when the 27th annual Women's Memorial March makes its way through the streets of the Downtown Eastside, students from Native Education College (NEC) will be among the supporters. While all NEC students are encouraged to partake in the event that honours the lives of missing and murdered Downtown Eastside women, it is a cause especially relevant to students of the Aboriginal justice studies (AJS) program.

"The majority of students who take this program are Indigenous students and it gives them a critical perspective into understanding why they are the way they are by examining how colonization and genocide has affected Indigenous nations in particular," says Tamara Starblanket, the program's coordinator. "Events like this are not only an opportunity for students to get involved in the community and sometimes help with community organization but they are also part of the healing process."

AJS is a one-year offering that explores topics related to crime and deviance, the criminal justice system and the role of law, including Aboriginal conceptions and practices of law and policing.

Through theory, case studies and group work, students also examine the challenges Aboriginal people face in the criminal justice system, and how Aboriginal cultural approaches to corrections, policing and courts help to address the result of colonization — which, says Starblanket, is evident in the over-representation of Aboriginal people processed by courts and prisons.

The program, she says, also includes a real world component in the form of a practicum placement that allows students to gain experience working with agencies and organizations related to criminal and social justice.

"We've had students working at a range of organizations such as border services, corrections, with police or native court workers and even the Red Cross," says Starblanket, who is also the author of the upcoming release Suffer the Little Children: Genocide, Indigenous Nations and the Canadian State — a book whose themes she says she incorporates into the classes she teaches.

CONTRIBUTED

Because the credits students earn in AJS are transferable to degree programs at Simon Fraser University and the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, many graduates, says Starblanket, choose to continue their studies.

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You're sailing through scholastic life with a smile and a spring in your step, until you get the news that an oral presentation is expected of you soon. The dread of public speaking sets in, and you begin to wonder how to possibly prepare for such a terrifying task. Dr. Martin Antony, professor at Ryerson University and author of the Shyness and Social Anxiety Workbook, says the best beginning is to keep the presentation in perspective.

"It will happen and then it will be over," says Antony. "Whatever happens won't matter much after it's done. A day later, a week later or a year later.

"Also, recognize that most people, including those in the audience, have anxiety around public speaking," reminds Anthony, adding that interpreting this presentation as a practice run for larger scale speaking engagements of the future will help to lessen the personal stakes.

Frank Leskovjan, career services counselor at the University of Winnipeg, adds that the pre-presentation jitters can be a positive for the student.

"Use your nervousness to motivate you to work hard on the presentation," says Leskovjan. "Preparing thoroughly can ensure you are confident about the material you are presenting."

Leskovjan advises this preparation might include enlisting a friend to play audience.

"Practicing in front of someone you trust who may offer positive, encouraging feedback can help you feel more comfortable about sharing what you have to say," Leskovjan says. "Have your notes written out clearly in point form so you can easily refer to them as you speak."

And on the day of the big event?

"Arrive early so you can organize your materials and feel ready and not rushed during your presentation" advises Leskovjan. "Take a few seconds to do some deep breathing or other relaxation techniques before you go up and speak.

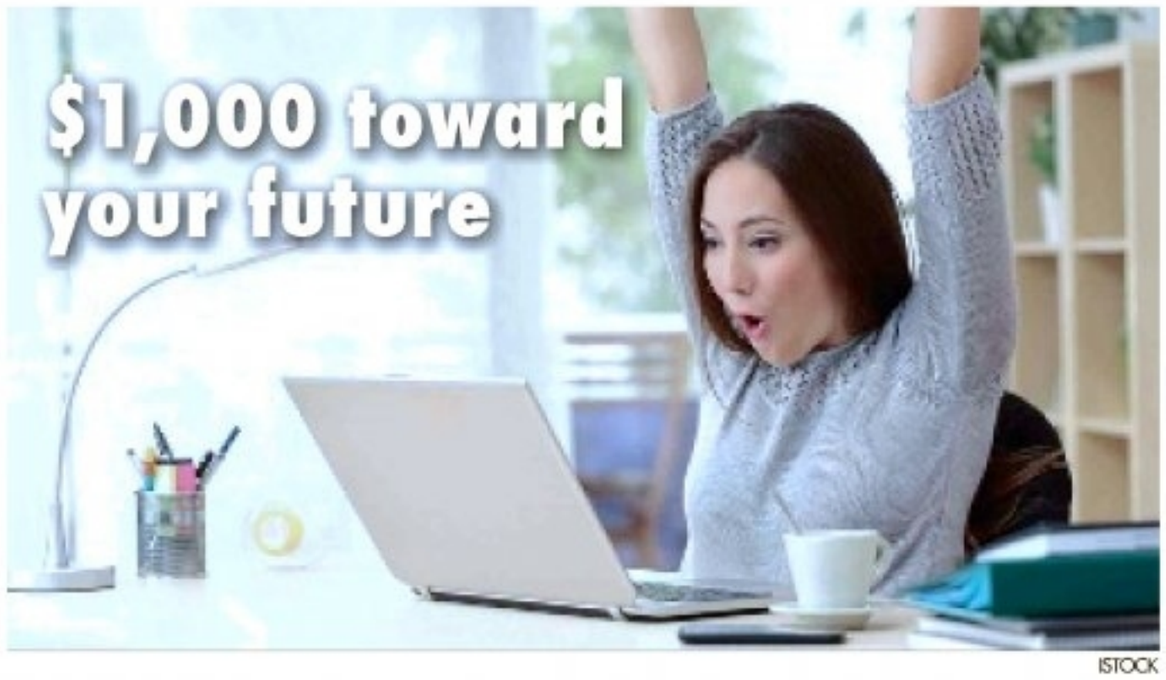
"And remember, you are not alone. Even persons who present to groups as their livelihood can experience times when they are nervous."

Dr. Wendy Doughty, assistant dean of students at the University of Alberta, reminds that although not everyone chooses public speaking as a career, the event of an oral presentation will likely make its way into every job position. So take the chance to gain the skill now.

"Being able to present your ideas effectively will be an asset to your career," says Doughty. "Take a workshop on presentation skills, take a drama or improv workshop, join Toastmasters, and learn from observing others."

— *LIZ BEDDALL*

ISTOCK



ISTOCK

Do you ever get the feeling there's so much more to your career? Maybe you'd like to advance in a field you're already working in, or maybe you know you'd feel satisfied by a different career entirely.

Wherever you want to take your career, getting a specialized education can give you a huge advantage that will help you pursue that career you're aiming for.

Now a local college is offering a limited-time bursary of $1,000* to help one student find their calling. Students who enroll in any program at CDI College Vancouver between Jan. 23 and Feb. 28, 2017, will be entered to win the bursary. It's one of 25 bursaries totaling $25,000 that CDI will be giving out across Canada.

The programs at CDI College are designed to help anyone who is looking to upgrade and become job-ready, equipped all the skills and knowledge employers in their chosen field are looking for.

Sign up for a cutting-edge technology program to start your career as a network systems administrator.

The school's many health care programs will help you dive into a career helping others in a job such as pharmacy assistant or social services worker.

CDI's business programs will help you develop a dynamic career in business as an accounting and payroll professional, hospitality specialist, or event planner.

To qualify for the bursary, students must enroll by Feb. 28, 2017. Learn more at bursaries.cdicollege.ca

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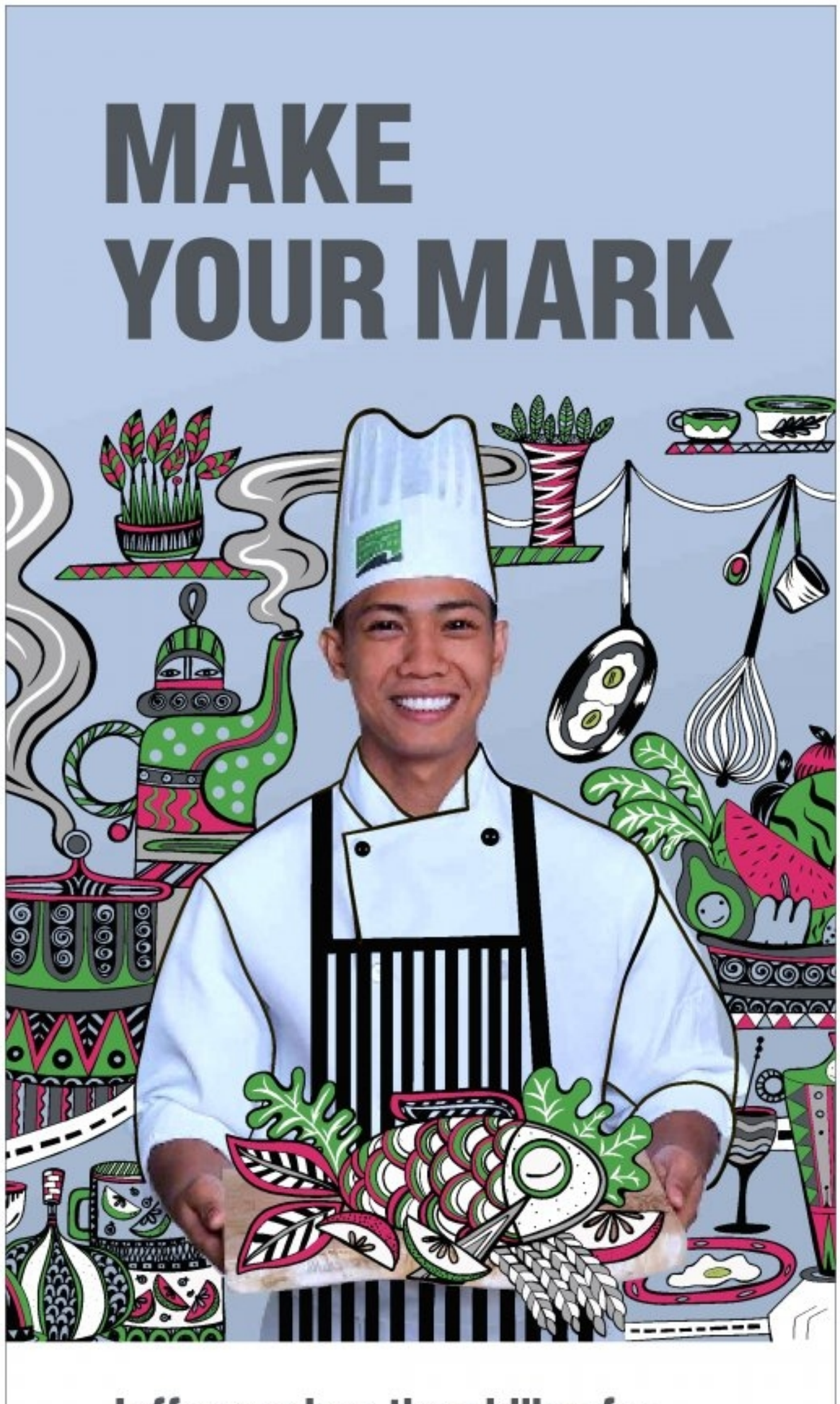
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Jefferson has the skills of a chef and the mind of a scientist, and he may just reinvent food as we know it.
VANCOUVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE
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CONTRIBUTED

Hospitality students put their hands-on experience to the test

In mid February, Vancouver Community College (VCC) will open its doors to the hospitality industry as the school's hospitality management department hosts Interview Week, which gives students the opportunity to interact with potential employers. The event is just one of many real world and practical experiences students encounter.

"Interview Week is an incredible opportunity for our hospitality management diploma and degree students to meet and be interviewed by industry professionals," says Monique Paassen, assistant department head of VCC's hospitality management department. "We have a very high percentage of students who obtain jobs at the end of this week."

VCC offers a two-year hospitality management diploma program geared towards students looking to start a career in the hospitality industry. It also facilitates a bachelor of hospitality management offering that is more career-focused and a bachelor of hospitality management executive cohort program for industry professionals who want to complete an offering with the flexibility to fit busy lifestyles.

In addition to Interview Week, says Paassen, students in all three of the programs also interact with the industry through field trips, volunteer opportunities and guest speakers who lecture on a variety of topics including industry trends, tourism issues and marketing strategies. Faculty members, she says, are another source of industry information.

"The best part of VCC's faculty is that each of our faculty members has a vast hospitality related background and many connections in the city," she says. "Whether it's pointing students in the right direction, putting students in contact with the right person or bringing up relevant stories and experiences, VCC's faculty provides extra attention and care with each and every one of its students."

In the classroom, meanwhile, students participate in a range of hands-on activities, including the use of hospitality management computer simulations software and experience in the Hospitality Management department's restaurant, The Bistro, which is open to the public three to four days a week.

"Our students will learn all about how to operate a restaurant (front of the house) as well as to how to prepare and cook dishes in our kitchen (back of the house)," says Paassen of the experience.

Help your employees advance with hands-on accounting education

Program helps junior accountants leap forward in their careers

Businesses thrive when they help junior staff earn the education they need to advance their careers.

Erin Swint, CPA, CA, has seen it happen. She's a partner at Squire and Company, a small accounting firm based in Mission and Abbotsford. The company is currently supporting a staff member who is taking the Advanced Certificate in Accounting and Finance (ACAF) offered by the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada.

The nationally recognized certificate helps junior accountants enhance their technical skills and qualify for intermediate-level positions.

People who take the program tend to be more stable and mature, "so they're more likely to stay with the organization a longer time," Swint says. These individuals want more education, but may not be interested in completing a CPA designation.

"The ACAF program allows us to retain bright people because they want to further their education, but don't necessarily want to be in a firm where it's up-or-out," says Swint. "For us, it means we've got really well-trained staff that understand the theoretical underpinnings of a file."

The program helps employees gain theoretical knowledge, as well as hands-on practical experience, with files they might not have seen in practice yet.

When staff further their education, the whole company benefits, Swint explains.

It's a great learning experience, not just for the individuals taking the program, but for everyone, since students of the ACAF program often troubleshoot with their colleagues and share their up-to-date knowledge.

The flexibility of the ACAF program is another major benefit for the company and its employees. Many are parents who are already balancing children and home lives with their work, but they want to advance professionally. The ACAF program is available online, so students can study whenever and wherever works best for them.

The employee at Squire and Company who is currently taking her ACAF certification is a single mom, and the program fits into her day-to-day life.

Swint says she's noticing the impact of the education. "We've already seen her confidence in the office improve substantially when she's dealing with files. She's a very bright young woman, but this just gives her an extra layer of knowledge and confidence."

Visit goCPAbc.ca/employers to find out more about how ACAF certified staff can benefit your business.

Erin Swint, CPA, CA, Squire and Company.
CONTRIBUTED

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Three-time Olympic short-track speedskating medallist Isabelle Charest has been named Canada's chef de mission for the 2018 Winter Olympics

Hitting his stride

CANUCKS

Horvat has become a linchpin player in third season

More than halfway through his third NHL season, Bo Horvat has a pretty good idea of what's waiting for him after each game.

The Vancouver Canucks centre has a few minutes to decompress before meeting with the media to dissect what just took place, be it good or bad. Then there's possibly a workout or a meal, but at some point during the familiar routine his cellphone will buzz with a text message.

His father Tim has watched the game — three times zones away when the Canucks are at home — in Rodney, Ont., and is offering a frank assessment.

"He waits up and gives me his opinion," Horvat said of his dad's messages, before adding with a smile: "Sometimes you don't like it. Sometimes you choose not to respond to it.

"But for the most part it's positive."

Tim Horvat likely hasn't been too disappointed this season with the play of his 21-year-old son, who leads the Canucks in scoring with 15 goals and 18 assists through 52 games.

Bo Horvat, who started the campaign as a surprising member of the fourth line, is now a linchpin for Vancouver. Many viewed Horvat as a checker with some offensive upside when he was selected ninth overall at the 2013 NHL draft — a serviceable player, but not one expected to put up significant points or drive the play.

Horvat had other ideas.

"I'm not satisfied with being a third-line centre, nor should anybody," he said. "Everybody should push to be better, everybody should push to want more.

"That's the biggest thing for me, to prove to myself and prove to everybody else I could do it."

Bo Horvat was Vancouver's lone representative at the NHL all-star game. BRUCE BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES

52

Horvat is on pace for 52 points this season.

> **It has to be earned. It can't be just given.**
> Bo Horvat on earning more ice time

Canucks head coach Willie Desjardins insists he didn't put his expectations for Horvat in a box, but there were times earlier this year when he was only seeing around 15 minutes of action a night.

Horvat has since gained a lot more trust — he now gets power-play time — and there's no denying his chemistry with linemate Sven Baertschi.

"The one thing you try not to do as a coach is put limits on guys," said Desjardins. "You don't put a limit on him and say: 'Bo's only capable of this.'"

What impresses Vancouver defenceman Luca Sbisa the most is how much the six-foot, 223-pound Horvat's skating has improved since he entered the league at 19 in 2014-15.

"I think guys are still underestimating how fast he is," said Sbisa. "He burns a lot of guys wide. He's a powerful guy with a big body and silky hands.

"He's got a lot of tricks up his sleeve and it's been really fun to watch him develop."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

SOCCER

NASL's new rule 'a violation of U.S. law'

A decision by the second-tier North American Soccer League to count Canadian players as domestics south of the border violates labour laws, according to Major League Soccer commissioner Don Garber.

Garber made the comments Monday during a wide-ranging media availability while visiting Vancouver to help the Whitecaps launch their 2017 season.

"It's a violation of U.S. law," said Garber. "We've looked at this issue since we launched teams up here in Canada."

Like the United Soccer League, the NASL started counting Canadian players as domestics last week, with MLS now the only pro league in North America that does not.

The continent's top soccer league, MLS has teams in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal along with its 19 American clubs.

MLS has changed some of its roster rules to increase the number of Canadians who count as domestics, with younger players being the main beneficiaries.

Canadian players who qualify as homegrown or who have met similar requirements as a member of specific youth teams now count as a domestic player for all MLS clubs, but only if they meet certain conditions.

If treated as an international player in the U.S., Canadians have to occupy one of eight international spots on a club's 28-man roster. THE CANADIAN PRESS

CROSS-BORDER

All U.S. players on Canadian MLS teams count as domestics.

IN BRIEF

Lions extend defensive lineman Turner

The B.C. Lions signed American defensive lineman Bryant Turner Jr. on Monday to a contract extension through the 2017 season.

Turner was eligible to become a free agent later this month.

The six-foot-two, 280-pound Turner joined the Lions as a free agent last season. He had 15 tackles and three sacks in 10 games. THE CANADIAN PRESS

DeRozan lifts Raptors to victory in return from injury

DeMar DeRozan returned from an ankle injury to lift the Toronto Raptors to 118-109 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers on Monday.

Playing for just the second time in eight games, the three-time all-star scored 31 points.

Kyle Lowry also became the Raptors (32-21) franchise leader in three-point shots made (804).

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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MAKE IT TONIGHT

Cosy Beef and Mushroom Stew

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

All this needs is a side of mashed potatoes to cosy up to.

Ready in 1 hour 20 minutes
Serves 4

Ingredients
- 2 lb stewing beef
- 2 Tbsp flour
- Salt and pepper
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 onions, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 lb mushrooms, halved or quartered, depending on size
- 2 large carrots, diced
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1/3 cup tomato paste
- 1/2 cup white or red wine (optional)
- 4 cups beef broth

Directions

1. Shake flour onto plate and season with salt and pepper. Dredge meat through the flour.

2. In a big pot or dutch oven, warm olive oil over medium heat. Brown meat in batches. Place cooked meat on a clean plate.

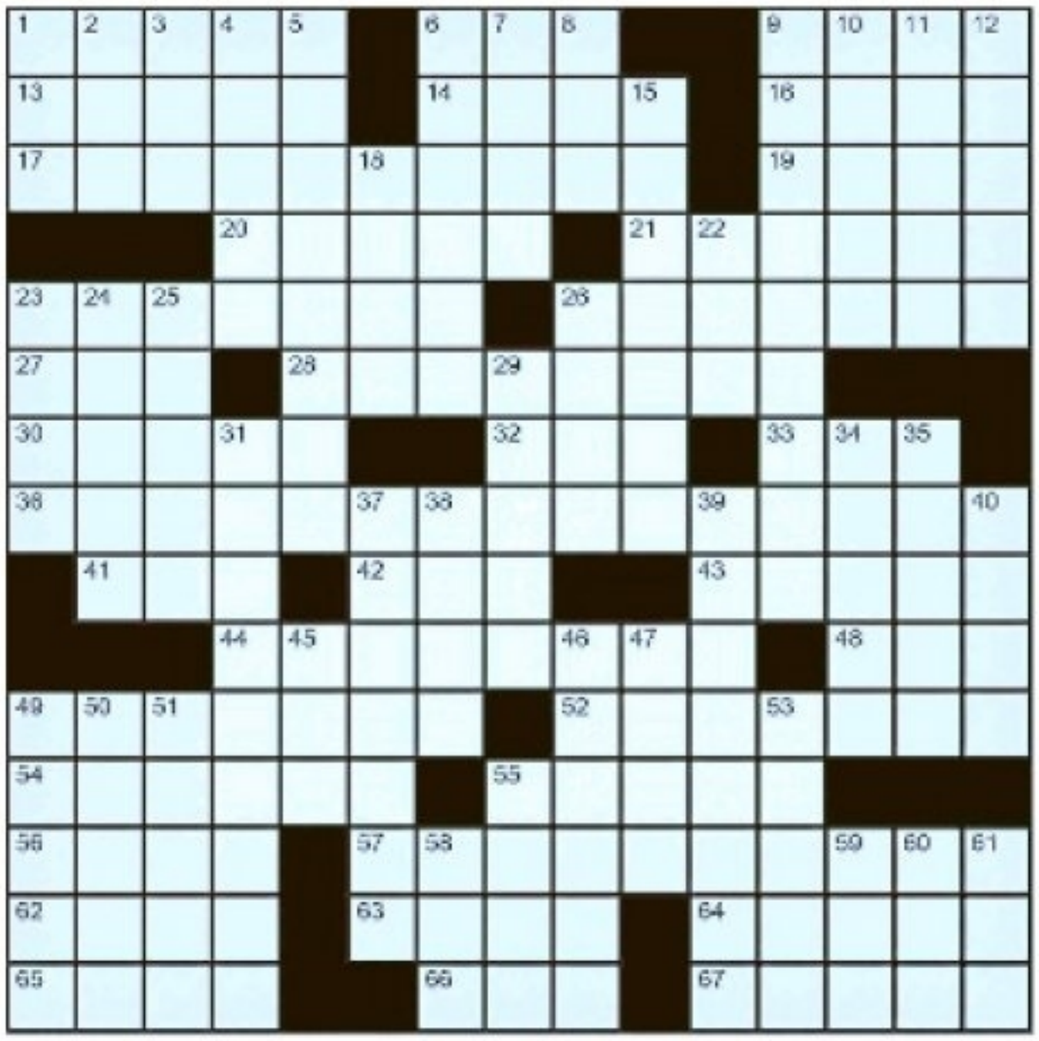
3. Add onion and garlic and sauté 3 minutes. Toss in mushrooms and thyme and cook another 5 minutes. Add tomato paste and stir well. Cook for a couple of minutes.

4. Add wine. Use wooden spoon to scrape bottom of the pot to loosen up all caramelized beefy goodness. Add stock and beef, bring it to a simmer, cover and simmer about an hour. Now add carrots and cook 10 minutes. Serve over mashed potatoes.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. "I'll have __ salad sandwich, please." (Lunchtime order)
6. Walther ___ (James Bond firearm)
9. 'Photosynth' suffix
13. Sister: French
14. Banff National Park creatures
16. Pound sound
17. Adrien Brody's Oscar-winning role movie: 2 wds.
19. Great Lake
20. __, Arizona
21. Royal court entertainer
23. German state bordering Austria
26. Victoria-born singer/songwriter Nelly
27. "Cold Mountain" (2003) role
28. 20th-century Spanish artist Mr. Dali
30. "That'll get done.", in radio communication
32. 'Fluor' finisher
33. Alias indicator
36. Team Wayne Gretzky was traded to (from the Edmonton Oilers) in 1988: 3 wds.
41. Ott. NHL player
42. 'Excess' suffix
43. Torpid
44. Mechanic's outfit
48. Pastureland
49. One extending a membership
52. Fan's rare audio of a rock concert
54. Python slayer in mythology
55. Harbour haulage
56. Ipsos Reid specialty
57. College society
62. Stagnate
63. Most preferred, for short
64. Jubilant, in verse
65. Ownership document
66. Marry
67. Retail complexes

DOWN
1. 'Bomb' add-on (Pompous talk)
2. Form of stage show in Japan
3. "Aaaii-_!!" (Comic book scream)
4. Dr. Sanjay __ (CNN's Chief Medical Correspondent)
5. Scottish documentarian who founded the National Film Board of Canada in 1939, John __ (b.1898 - d.1972)
6. Corresponding chum: 2 wds.
7. Ballet move
8. Initials-sharers of Kendall Jenner's older sisters
9. Meticulous work woe, perhaps
10. Mattress brand
11. Nicki Minaj song: 2 wds.
12. 'I hope', to Caesar
15. Nunavut: Igloo-shaped attraction in Iqaluit, __ __ Anglican Cathedral
18. "What ___ mind reader?"
22. 'Ranch' suffix
23. Wail
24. "Good-bye!"
25. Waltz, in Paris
26. Lose colour, as jeans
29. More repulsive
31. Invalidated
34. Solemn bell sound
35. Concur
37. Emit: 2 wds.
38. By any chance?
39. Unit of weight in Canada
40. Male deer
45. Stealth bird
46. Declined
47. Mythology
49. Sort of transit
50. Lyric poem
51. __ prosequi (Not proceeding, in law)
53. Polynesian archipelago kingdom
55. Prehistoric paintings place, perhaps
58. Not cooked, as meat
59. __-defined
60. Address book abbr.
61. Go-ahead response

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
Avoid domestic arguments today, because they will easily arise — especially with a female relative. People are touchy, emotional and volatile. You have been warned.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
This is a classic day for arguments with others, especially siblings, relatives and neighbors. This angry energy might cause you to have an accident. Be careful.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Disputes about money and possessions are likely today. They could relate to something at home or to a female relative. Either way, tread carefully.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Today the Moon is in your sign, which makes you more emotional than usual. On top of that, it is at odds with fiery Mars. This is a challenging day! Remain calm so to avoid disputes with others.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
This is a restless day. There's no doubt that you feel impatient with others. You might not speak up, but inside you are secretly gritting your teeth. Easy does it.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
People are quarrelsome today. When talking to a friend or perhaps a member of a group, you must tread carefully. Don't go looking for trouble, because it will find you.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Be careful when talking to authority figures today, especially your mother or a female boss. The bottom line is that people are emotionally volatile today, and they will react without thinking first. Be cool.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Avoid controversial subjects like politics, religion and racial issues today, because things will go south in a New York minute. Don't try to win or keep score. Just keep the peace.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Choose another day to discuss how to divide an inheritance or share something with someone, because a discussion will quickly deteriorate into a fight.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You have to go more than halfway when dealing with others, because this is a dicey day. Frankly, things are not going your way. Just tread water.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Be patient with co-workers and customers today, especially female acquaintances. Don't get your belly in a rash.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Parents will have to be patient with their kids today. Likewise, romantic partners must be patient with each other, because it's a quarrelsome day! Easy does it.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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8			2	6	3			1
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	9						8	
	2	4				6	9	
	6						3	
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	5						6	

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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers from the play page.

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3	5	6	8	1	4	7	2	9
9	8	2	3	7	5	1	4	6
5	9	8	2	6	7	4	3	1
6	2	3	4	8	1	5	9	7
4	7	1	9	5	3	2	6	8
2	1	4	7	3	6	9	8	5
7	6	9	5	2	8	3	1	4
8	3	5	1	4	9	6	7	2

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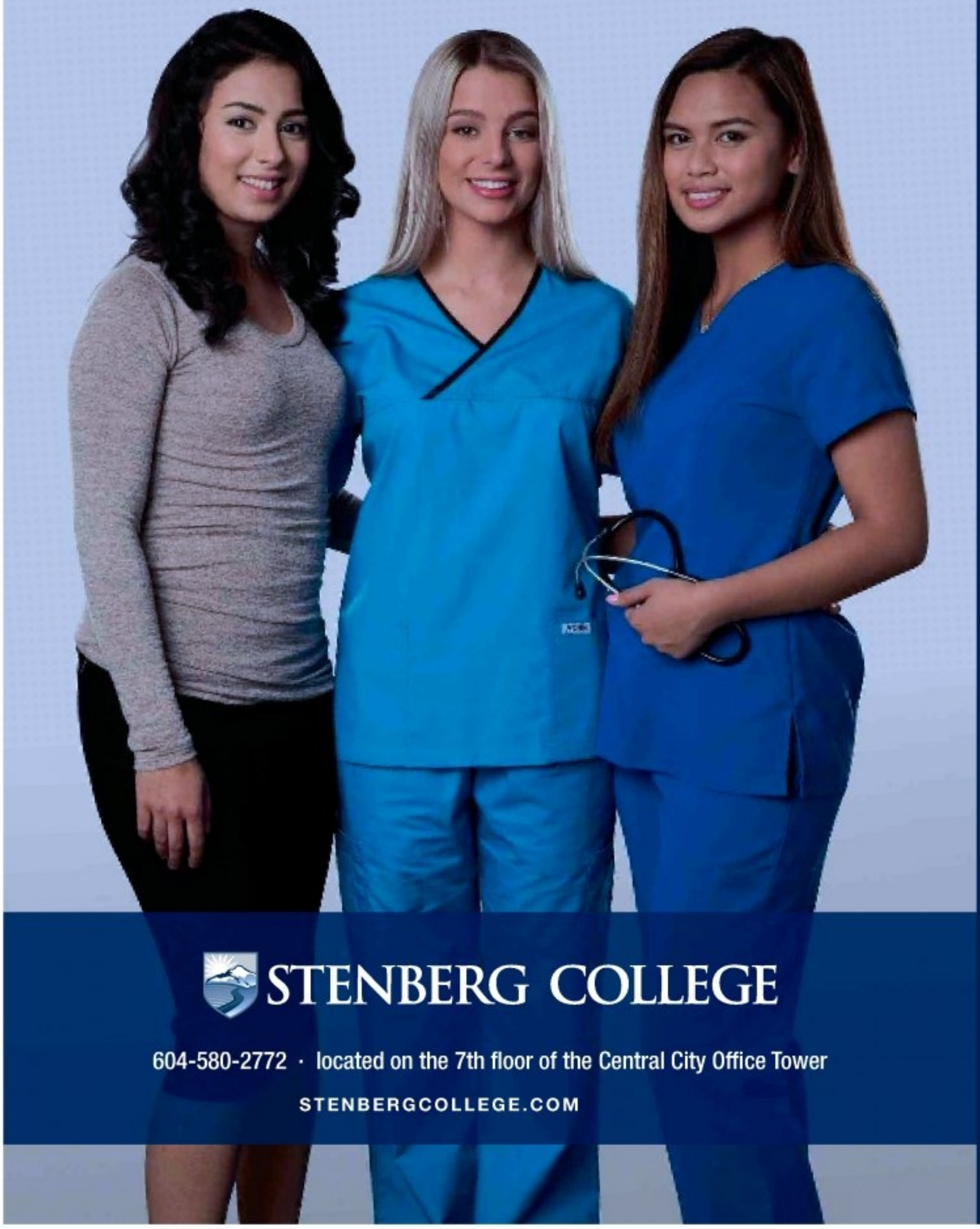

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